Pet Shop Boys - Fundamental (Special Edition) [2006]

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CD 1

1.Pet Shop Boys - Psychological 2.Pet Shop Boys - The sodom and gomorrah show 3.Pet Shop Boys - I made my excuses and left 4.Pet Shop Boys - Minimal 5.Pet Shop Boys - Numb 6.Pet Shop Boys - God willing 7.Pet Shop Boys - Cod willing 9.Pet Shop Boys - Im with stupid 9.Pet Shop Boys - Casanova in hell 10.Pet Shop Boys - Twentieth century 11.Pet Shop Boys - Indefinite leave to remain 12.Pet Shop Boys - Integral

CD2

1.Pet Shop Boys - Fugitive
2.Pet Shop Boys - Sodom
3.Pet Shop Boys - Psychological
4.Pet Shop Boys - Flamboyant
5.Pet Shop Boys - Im with stupid
6.Pet Shop Boys - In private
7.Pet Shop Boys - Minimal
8.Pet Shop Boys - Gomorrah
Neil Tennant Chris Lowe + Others

Working together for the first time since the 1988 single "Left to My Own Devices," the Pet Shop Boys and producer Trevor Horn partner together for Fundamental, an extremely well-crafted effort that is more of its time message-wise than any previous PSB album. Fundamental is heavily influenced by Tony Blair's allegiance to George W. Bush and his dragging of the U.K. into the Iraq War, which has left previously Labour Party-loving vocalist Neil Tennant bitter and

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disillusioned. Fully aware that the Pet Shop Boys would sound ridiculous if angry and punkish, Tennant and partner Chris Lowe show restraint, putting their venom on simmer on the most riveting songs and searching for a reason not to stick their head in the sand elsewhere. Surprisingly, the usually extravagant Horn follows suit, and while he gives the album a very modern, slick sheen, the production is well designed instead of gloriously decorated. Beautifully polished by Horn, "Luna Park" lazily strolls through a holiday where fortunetellers and fire breathers divert attention from the slowly developing storm. Giving up hope entirely is "Numb," an insular ballad that songwriter Diane Warren originally gave to the duo for the hits collection PopArt that's much more at home here. Better still is infectious and uptempo "I'm with Stupid," which casts Blair and Bush as irresponsible lovers who grin and pose while having their way with the world. It's not the only instantly gripping track -- the paranoid "Integral" speaks out for personal freedom with a wicked hook while the New Order-esque "Minimal" ranks with their best club cuts -- but the majority of Fundamental is like the majority of their great album Behavior in that repeat listens are required to do these rich songs justice. For Pet Shop Boys fans who lean to the left and are skeptical about the future, this is as close to heaven as they want to be. ---David Jeffries, AllMusic Review

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